(b) how the Wholesale Price Index is constructed and what is the weightage given to foodgrain, vegetables, milk etc. on one side and other items of daily use on the otherside;

(c) how many times the rates for Dearness Allowance were increased since 2002-03 upto 31 December, 2007 indicating the rates at 1 April, 2002 and 31 December, 2007, year-wise; and

(d) whether Government intends to change the construction formula to control inflationary pressure?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) WPI is an economy-wide index covering 435 commodities. Weights of the commodities are derived based on the value of quantities traded in the domestic market. It is currently the most comprehensive measure of economy-wide inflation available with high frequency. The weights assigned to foodgrains, vegetables and milk in the commodities basket of WPI (1993-94=100) is 5.01 per cent, 1.46 per cent and 4.37 per cent, respectively.

(c) to (d) Dearness Allowance is calculated on the basis of the average of preceding 12 months Consumer price index for Industrial Workers. It becomes due twice a year in January and July. Total 11 instalments of dearness allowances have become due from July 2002 to July 2007. The formula for calculation of dearness allowance has remained same.

Gross Budgetary Support for key areas

1143. SHRI D. RAJA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Gross Budgetary Support in respect of some key areas like rural development, accelerated irrigation benefit programme have been facing significant cut in 2008-09;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government would consider any other measures to save these key areas of development; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No. Sir. Allocation for Rural Development comprising the three demands of Department of Rural Development, Department of Land Resources and Department of Drinking Water Supply has gone up from Rs. 36560 crore in BE 2007-08 to Rs. 42400 crore in BE 2008-09. Allocation for Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme and Other Water Resources Programmes has also gone up from Rs. 3580 crore in BE 2007-08 to Rs. 5550 crore in BE 2008-09.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.